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ABSTRACT

Noting that many teachers and teacher educators were unprepared for the rapid spread of inclusionary placements for at-risk and special learners, this fastback presents principles and practices for teaching struggling learners the basic reading skills they need for academic progress and lifelong learning. The discussions in the fastback are designed to orient educators to the philosophy, knowledge, and skills required to respond to the challenge of providing inclusive reading instruction. The fastback provides five principles that serve as general guidelines for teachers: (1) choose and emphasize the most promising instructional methods; (2) emphasize authentic reading content and skills; (3) offer appropriate accommodations and assistance; (4) increase collaboration to synergize inclusive reading instruction; and (5) expand routine monitoring and evaluation to adjust instruction. (Contains 48 references. An appendix contains options for supplemental reading accommodations.) (RS)

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FASTBACK

ED 423 512

Inclusive Instruction for Struggling Readers

Joyce S. Choate
Thomas A. Rakes

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Inclusive Instruction for Struggling Readers

by
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and
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Table of Contents

Introduction 7

Principle 1: Choose and Emphasize the Most Promising Instructional Methods 10
Practice 1: Differentiate Reading Instruction to Meet Individual Needs 10
Practice 2: Capitalize on Strategies That Are Effective for Most Students 12
Practice 3: Use Strategies Validated for Inclusive Teaching and Learning 18
Practice 4: Select Specific Reading Experiences to Facilitate Inclusive Teaching and Learning 24
Practice 5: Consider Time and Effort Demands When Choosing Reading Strategies 30
Practice 6: Organize the Instructional Environment to Embrace Inclusive Reading Instruction 31

Principle 2: Emphasize Authentic Reading Content and Skills 33
Practice 7: Select Authentic Reading Content and Purposes 33
Practice 8: Emphasize and Explicitly Teach the Most Authentic Reading Skills 34
Practice 9: Teach Reading Skills When Students Need Them 38

Principle 3: Offer Appropriate Accommodations and Assistance 40
Practice 10: Maximize Reader Success 40
Practice 11: Structure Appropriate Reading Practice 41
Practice 12: Arrange for Suitable Recreational Reading 42
Practice 13: Adjust Reading Tasks According to Student Learning Profiles 44
Practice 14: Select Appropriate Reading Accommodations 45

Principle 4: Increase Collaboration to Synergize Inclusive Reading Instruction 47
Practice 15: Collaborate with Other Professionals to Enhance and Coordinate an Inclusive Reading Program 47
Practice 16: Collaborate with Students to Plan, Monitor, and Evaluate Reading Progress 48
Practice 17: Collaborate with Families to Plan and Monitor Reading Progress 49

Principle 5: Expand Routine Monitoring and Evaluation to Adjust Instruction 51
Practice 18: Teach Reading Diagnostically 51
Practice 19: Provide Regular Supervision and Guidance 52
Practice 20: Commit to Inclusionary Reading Practices 52

References 54

Appendix: Options for Supplemental Reading Accommodations 59

Introduction

Many teachers and teacher educators were unprepared for the rapid spread of inclusionary placements for at-risk and special learners. Teachers are expected to provide appropriate instruction to a variety of students, many of whom struggle to read. But this is neither a new nor overwhelmingly difficult challenge. Much of what effective reading teachers routinely do can be adapted to accommodate many types of special needs. Indeed, a major premise of inclusive education is that good instruction benefits learners of all types.

This fastback presents principles and practices for teaching struggling learners the basic reading skills they need for academic progress and lifelong learning. The discussions that follow are designed to orient educators to the philosophy, knowledge, and skills required to respond to the challenge of providing inclusive reading instruction. Implicit in each discussion is the professional responsibility to offer appropriate, high-quality instruction as early as possible in order to prevent reading difficulties and to intervene before problems are compounded (National Research Council 1998).

We suggest five principles as general guidelines. The first principle involves the use of the most promising instructional practices. In fact, many of these effective practices already are part of good teaching; what is needed is differentiated instruction that takes into account the nature and degree of accommodation and the emphasis, explicitness, intensity, duration, and supervision of instruction, evaluation, and collaboration.

The second principle emphasizes the use of authentic reading content and skills to ensure that reading instruction is relevant to students and their needs. Meaningful and practical content and skills also increase the likelihood that students will pursue reading for both learning and recreation.

The third principle calls for appropriate accommodations that render the authentic reading content accessible to students and make it more likely that they will master the skills. Practices associated with this principle focus on manipulating instructional variables — the learning environment, actual reading tasks and materials, reading practice experiences, and specific supplements that accommodate readers' unique needs.

The fourth principle is collaboration, a centerpiece of inclusive reading instruction. Active participants include general and special education teachers, students, their families, and other professionals. Increasing and systematizing collaboration synergizes the inclusive process.

The fifth principle includes monitoring, evaluation, and perspective. Frequent monitoring and evaluation are needed to identify whether, which, and when adjust-

ments are required. Review, reconsideration, and, most important, teacher commitment to inclusive reading instruction help to maintain momentum and perspective.

Principle 1: Choose and Emphasize the Most Promising Instructional Methods

The practices that follow are drawn from studies of effective teaching, practices validated for inclusive teaching, facilitative activities, differentiated instruction, and practical considerations. Each practice is described in terms of how it will enhance reading instruction.

Practice 1: Differentiate Reading Instruction to Meet Individual Needs

Differentiation means systematically varying instruction to meet individual student needs. Teachers differentiate instruction by manipulating three major instructional variables: the content, or what to learn; the process, or how to learn; and the products, or how to demonstrate learning.

The content used to teach struggling readers can be modified with three types of adjustment to the curriculum, each suggesting procedures to select according to student needs.

- Select practical reading content: Choose passages that address real-life issues (see Practice 7); emphasize authentic reading skills (see Practice 8).
- Supplement the reading curriculum: Add instruction in prerequisite reading skills as needed; offer special accommodations to facilitate each reader's progress as needed (see Practice 14).
- Simplify the reading curriculum: Focus on prerequisite skills as the main content; use alternative reading materials to decrease (or increase) the level of complexity, and use structured materials for skill practice.

Differentiating the process of reading instruction involves manipulating seven of the traditional instructional variables: explicitness, intensity, duration, tasks, supplements, supervision, and lesson formats. Offering a blend of whole-class, small-group, and individual instruction permits the teacher to provide differentiated instruction.

For example, the amount of direct and explicit instruction each student will need depends on his or her reading performances, rate of learning, and ability to generalize skills to new reading situations. Highly proficient readers may need only a brief explanation, while struggling readers may require direct instruction that features some or all of these tactics:

- Guide readers to analyze the target task.
- Offer explicit instruction for the component skills.
- Explain how and when to apply the skills.

- Model skill application.
- Coach students to apply the reading skills in the context of meaningful passages.

Sometimes the most efficient means of differentiation is to make simple adjustments to assigned tasks. Specific procedures to consider include:

- Decrease the length of an assigned reading.
- Reduce the number of reading tasks.
- Have the students listen to part of a passage and read another part.
- Lower the difficulty of reading material.
- Simplify the purposes for reading.

Finally, teachers should provide struggling students with a variety of options for applying and demonstrating their reading abilities. Some may need smaller goals, shorter or easier assignments, and less demanding responses. For example, a teacher might ask a student to find a supporting detail instead of the main idea or to circle the main idea rather than to state it in his or her own words. Permitting some oral answers in lieu of all written responses also can help some struggling readers.

Practice 2: Capitalize on Strategies That Are Effective for Most Students

Using instructional strategies that are effective for all types of learners may be the quickest, easiest, and most familiar way in which teachers can make their teaching more inclusive. During the 1970s and 1980s, a series of studies identified specific behaviors that render instruc-

tion more effective. Among the findings summarized by Brophy and Good (1986) were two general conclusions with far-reaching implications: 1) Effective teachers enhance academic learning time, and 2) they structure learning tasks to make them more accessible.

Increasing learning time for reading means more than just allotting more time for reading activities; it also means ensuring that students are actively engaged in reading during that time. Part of that active engagement should be used for reflection. Metacognitive and reflective practices encourage reader engagement with text. While reading, students need to use self-questioning about "how they know" or "how they think." Following are useful strategies:

Think-alouds help students learn to self-monitor, thereby increasing active engagement (Baumann, Jones, and Seifert-Kessel 1993). Using this technique, teachers orally demonstrate their cognitive strategies by verbalizing how they analyze, question, and construct meaning from print. Metacognitive practices are modeled by teachers, who then coach student pairs to share predictions and participate in their own student-to-student think-aloud sessions.

Scaffolding is a strategy for conducting cooperative teacher-guided interactions with text (Graves, Graves, and Braaten 1996). Using three scaffolding levels, activities begin with the teacher modeling, for example, activation and application of prior knowledge, prereading or adjunct questions, idea maps, or strategies to locate key words. Teachers invite student participation during modeling. Next, students attempt an assigned reading

task, such as silent or guided reading, and apply the modeled strategies. The final step uses verbal cueing for review, written or drawn responses, or the questioning strategies suggested later for Practice 3.

Interactive activities encourage students' active engagement and enhance communication skills. Regardless of format, reading and language activities in which students interact with text help focus attention on target tasks and content. Examples of dynamic activities include round-robin retellings, dialogue journals, story dramatizations, and whole-class responses to reading issues and questions. Cooperative learning activities and peer-mediated instruction, both strategies validated for inclusive instruction, tend to maximize interaction.

O'Shea (1994) describes five techniques to support effective reading instruction:

- Create positive expectations.
- Use appropriate time allocation for on-task instruction.
- Employ effective organization and management strategies.
- Conduct structured lessons.
- Encourage appropriate questioning, self-monitoring, and reflection experiences.

Integrated language arts instruction is literacy instruction that integrates reading, speaking, listening, written expression, and spelling. Such integration is multisensory and so enhances learning opportunities. For example, when new vocabulary words are presented in

context, discussed individually, analyzed by sound, studied as new spelling words, and applied in writing experiences, learning is reinforced.

Integrated content study offers the advantages of integrated literacy instruction and also increases the likelihood of content mastery in science, social studies, mathematics, and other disciplines. Of particular importance is explicitly teaching content vocabulary, because it carries the majority of the conceptual load in a subject area.

The reading requirements of content texts often exceed the reading skills of struggling learners. When this occurs, it may help to adjust the reading tasks, the text level, or the type of text. The same is true for focusing instruction on key terms and using other assistive techniques (Choate and Rakes 1997). Such assistance includes:

- Provide study guides, story frames, and advance organizers to supplement text.
- Highlight key concepts in the text with a felt marker.
- Supplement concepts and content with oral presentations, audio- and videotapes, pictures, captioned films, computer simulations, hands-on experiences, and demonstrations.
- Initially explain concepts and content using one or more of the above supplements, then have students read text.
- Use a text written on an easier reading level.
- Provide appropriate accommodations (see Practice 14).
- Specifically teach study strategies.

Study strategies should be taught explicitly. Important strategies include vocabulary expansion, reading and interpreting graphic information, locating resources, and using advance organizers. In addition, when, why, and how to adjust one's rate of reading and regular guided practice in skimming, scanning, and study reading are essential learning experiences. Effective application of such techniques as study guide usage, semantic mapping (Smith and Johnson 1980), and ReQuest, or reciprocal questioning (Manzo 1969), also may enhance performance.

Specialized early intervention programs have received positive reviews based on their use in selected school districts. Although intense teacher training is sometimes required, their value is worth exploring. One such program is Reading Recovery (Clay 1987), begun in New Zealand and implemented in many classes across the United States. Reading Recovery is a one-to-one tutorial program for first-graders whose reading performance is below average. This specialized program involves the use of repeated readings, writing experiences, vocabulary development, and letter identification and word analysis as needed. There are such specialized features as "running records," which teachers maintain to systematically document reading performance. Reading Recovery features intensive teacher training and is considered to be a very effective preventive tutorial program.

Success for All (Madden et al. 1987) is another early intervention program that overlaps with other reading instruction. Originally designed for at-risk readers, this

program offers reading instruction to students in homogeneous groupings for 90 minutes each day. Explicit instruction is offered during teaching sessions, with no independent seatwork assigned. Additional sessions are offered as needed for decoding, language skills, story structure, and comprehension. Instructional materials include basal readers and specially designed stories that highlight target phonic elements. Excellent results have been reported for most learners (Slavin et al. 1994).

Another reading program that may help struggling readers is the Spalding Method: The Writing Road to Reading, based on a phonetic approach originated by Samuel Orton's program for dyslexia (Spalding 1990). Students are taught 1,500 high-frequency words, as well as 54 phonograms, which they immediately transfer to written vocabulary using language notebooks. Daily three-hour lessons allow students to practice spelling, read previously learned phonograms, and engage in writing activities. As students progress, they write sentences, paragraphs, and then stories in their language notebooks. The success of the program has been partially attributed to its integration of spelling, reading, and writing using a scaffolding approach.

These three programs are examples of specialized intervention programs described by Slavin (1996) in his plea for intervening before students fail. He suggests the concept of "neverstreaming," or bypassing the need for special education and mainstreaming by offering effective intervention programs during the early years.

Practice 3: Use Strategies Validated for Inclusive Teaching and Learning

Several strategies have been validated for inclusive instruction (Fisher, Schumaker, and Deshler 1995). These include cooperative learning, peer-mediated instruction, organizing activities, strategy instruction, and direct reading instruction. These instructional strategies are amenable to differentiation, are appropriate for reading instruction, and apply to able readers as well.

Cooperative learning activities have been found to be effective for teaching most students, especially low-achieving students. Although a variety of formats have been used, systematic structure, individual or group rewards, heterogeneous groupings, and specific roles for group members are the common components. The writings of Robert Slavin and David and Roger Johnson clearly describe procedures for specific cooperative learning formats.

Jigsaw is one of the most popular cooperative learning formats. Jigsaw (Slavin 1995) is a specific cooperative approach that consists of two components: teacher preparation and classroom utilization. The first part involves preparing instructional materials for a two- or three-day lesson, followed by the creation of heterogeneous, student expert teams. The second part, classroom use, entails introduction of the strategy, facilitating team efforts as expert groups, and administering a short quiz. For example, students might focus on a mini-research project related to expanding knowledge about the setting

or time period of a story. "Experts" — designated students — would be responsible for discovering and sharing information about particular facets of the story setting: the time period, climate, culture, schools, and so forth. Designating students as experts is an important motivational feature of this strategy, especially for low-achievers who have seldom experienced such status at school.

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) is a strategy that targets reading activities using a specially designed reading curriculum (Slavin, Stevens, and Madden 1988). It includes four major components, with the first three parts implemented in heterogeneous cooperative groups. Students interactively engage in activities related to basal readers, explicit instruction for reading comprehension, and integrated language arts activities. Parent involvement, the fourth component, entails students regularly reading with their parents at home. Provided all four components are implemented, this strategy is effective in inclusive settings.

The Directed Reading Sequence is a promising interactive strategy for teaching reading to low-achieving readers (Klemp 1997). In this strategy, members of cooperative learning groups read a passage and then perform one of four assigned tasks: The first student paraphrases the content, the next student verifies or modifies the first response, the third student summarizes the information in a single sentence, and the fourth writes the summary statement to display and share with other groups. This process offers assistance to struggling readers and provides interactive experiences in retelling, elaborating, summarizing, and writing about reading.

Carefully orchestrated, cooperative learning activities can greatly enhance both the quantity and quality of instruction, increase active engagement, emphasize the social nature of reading as communication, and teach social skills. These same advantages are cited for peer-mediated instruction.

Peer-mediated instruction features peer modeling, peer monitoring, and peer tutoring. Optional formats for peer-mediated instruction that have been successful with struggling students include: cross-age tutoring, in which older or younger students offer individualized tutoring; reverse-role tutoring, in which struggling students tutor younger students; and ClassWide Peer Tutoring, developed by Utley, Mortweet, and Greenwood (1997). All three formats are applicable to reading instruction, and whole-class tutoring is especially appropriate for teaching reading in an inclusive classroom.

ClassWide Peer Tutoring (CWPT) is an instructional system in which students are paired for reciprocal teaching. Pairs also are assigned to one of two teams. The teacher monitors students' responses and rewards appropriate peer teaching. Each pair of students implements specific procedures, including immediate correction of errors by the acting tutor. For example, Student A (tutee) reads a passage to Student B (tutor), who awards points for each sentence read correctly and for self-corrections; Student B asks Student A literal questions and then provides feedback and rewards for correct answers. The CWPT format also readily accommodates a wide range of reading activities, including practice in high-frequency words and phrases (Greenwood and Delquadri 1995).

Organizing activities are important because the way in which instructional content is presented strongly affects the learning that occurs. Struggling readers need extra help organizing their attention, thinking, and learning before, during, and after reading. Graphic organizers, study guides, and teaching routines facilitate organized teaching and learning. Several of the related activities embody study strategies as well.

Graphic organizers, visual representations of the relationships among concepts, make reading content more accessible and comprehensible. The organizers may take many forms — flow charts, word maps, story maps, word or concept webs — and may be constructed by the teacher for a prereading activity, partially constructed and then completed by students during reading, or developed by students after reading. Interactive discussions about completed graphics add details and clarify relationships. Self-generated visual representations may positively affect comprehension for older or gifted readers (Rakes, Rakes, and Smith 1995).

Study guides are especially valuable to struggling students, who need the extra assistance to organize important details and ideas. Possible format variations include: written review of background information to support passage content, outline of a passage as a prereading activity, partial outline of key concepts to complete during reading, outline of key concepts to which students add supporting details during or after reading, summary of key concepts or details for students to preview or review, computer-based guides that provide access to supplemental information for clarification, or a pretest that

students answer, check, and then read to find correct answers. Each variation is appropriate for use individually or in cooperative groups.

Routines that the teacher follows in structuring reading lessons also affect knowledge and skill acquisition. A variety of activities that assist readers can be built into the teaching routine. For example, the teacher might introduce the reading topic with an advance organizer, assess and activate prior knowledge and build new background, show relationships among passage concepts with a story web, clarify and expand students' understanding of central vocabulary, explicitly teach skills essential for reading the passage, and then give students purposes and guide their reading.

Strategy instruction is supported by a rich body of research. Teaching learning strategies shows students how to learn and how to apply what they learn, thus helping them to become self-regulating learners. Learning strategies have been successful across the curriculum with a wide range of age and ability levels. Publications by Deshler, Ellis, and Lenz (1996) and Pressley and Harris (1990) outline details and specific procedures.

Specific strategies can help students accomplish almost every reading task and skill: understanding vocabulary words, paraphrasing, self-questioning, identifying interrelationships, finding the main idea and supporting details, and the like. For example, RAP (Schumaker, Denton, and Deshler 1984), is a strategy for summarizing passage content:

Read paragraph.
Ask self questions.
Put in own words.

POSSE (Englert and Mariage 1991) is a strategy used to guide general comprehension:

Predict ideas.
Organize ideas.
Search for structure.
Summarize main ideas.
Evaluate understanding.

The mnemonic names of these strategies remind students of their component steps.

In fact, mnemonic strategies constitute a specific category of learning strategies that strengthen initial learning, long-term memory, and data retrieval. Mastropieri and Scruggs (1991) describe a variety of techniques and formats, including pictured links for remembering letter sounds (a picture of an apple embedded in lower case *a*), acrostics for spelling difficult words (**A** rat **i**n the **h**ouse **m**ay **e**at **t**he **i**ce **c**ream for *arithmetic*), several key word strategies for understanding vocabulary, and acronyms for recalling content information.

Specific reading skills, when presented appropriately, are themselves reading and learning strategies. That is, when readers know when, why, and how to apply a reading skill strategically, then that skill functions as a reading strategy.

Direct instruction is a comprehensive instructional system for teaching most basic subjects. Results of its

use for improving reading achievement in inclusive settings have been dramatically positive (Carnine, Silbert, and Kameenui 1997). Direct instruction is characterized by behavioral objectives, structured reading materials, specific organization and routines for teacher and students, teacher modeling, instructional scripts, choral responding, specific skill instruction, small-group activities, integrated corrective procedures, and a strong phonics component. Reading lessons begin with teacher demonstrations and include guided reading practice, then independent practice. Reading programs that exemplify direct instruction include the Corrective Reading Series, DISTAR, and the SRA Reading Mastery series.

Practice 4: Select Specific Reading Experiences to Facilitate Inclusive Teaching and Learning

Several instructional practices facilitate inclusive teaching. Most of the strategies suggested here also include one or more elements of the teaching procedures outlined earlier.

Prior knowledge can be activated and improved by attending to at least two different types of schema: personal knowledge and text-based knowledge. Prior knowledge is necessary to provide readers sufficient "schemata" to understand what they are reading. This means that teachers should check readers' personal knowledge about a particular topic before beginning to read and, when necessary, provide prereading expla-

nations, examples, frames of reference, and other knowledge-building activities. Providing prereading knowledge is especially helpful for struggling readers, the students who often have had only limited experiences. Building text-based knowledge is somewhat more complex and involves assisting readers to understand contextual information during and after reading. Idea maps, advance and graphic organizers, and study guides are types of schema-building activities that enhance text comprehension (Tierney, Readence, and Dishner 1995).

Effective questioning can be a primary means of improving comprehension; but if it is used solely as an interrogation tool, questioning loses its instructional power. At least three levels of questions should be posed before, during, and after reading: literal, inferential, and critical. The easiest questions, and the most frequently used, are the literal, text-explicit questions that ensure understanding of the most important details and also guide students to review content. Inferential questions about text-implicit information require students to "read between the lines" to synthesize content with experience. Critical comprehension questions require students to "read beyond the lines" to evaluate what they read. Inference questions are difficult for some students with special needs, while critical questions are problematic for students in general. Struggling readers may need much modeling, coaching, and prompting, using very easy passages, to answer the more difficult types of questions.

Because questioning about reading is so pervasive, students need explicit instruction in how to respond to

different types of question formats, including discussion, open-end, multiple choice, true-false, and matching. "Teach the way you test and test the way you teach" is an important reminder to teachers of any subject. If a great deal of importance is placed on the results of specific achievement tests, then the question format of those tests should be practiced during reading, language, and study strategy lessons.

Another important consideration in questioning is wait time, or the pause after posing questions. As a general rule, waiting four or five seconds after asking a question allows students to think before answering.

Also, the way in which a teacher responds to students' answers influences students' future participation. Productive teacher responses that encourage students to answer and discuss include probing for elaboration, discussing answers, requesting justification, asking how answers were found, and providing positive reinforcement.

Actively involving students in asking and answering questions is an important way to maximize engagement. By dividing a single question into several parts, the number of students who can be actively involved increases. For example: "What are three reasons why the goats crossed the bridge? Karee, what is one reason?" The first student's answer offers a model for struggling students to follow. The teacher also can involve more than one student in answering a single question. Ask one student the answer, a second to read aloud to verify, and a third to describe how to find or think through the answer.

The Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy also enhances question responses (Raphael 1984). One

of the most researched strategies of recent years, QAR involves asking a question and, if a student is unable to respond, providing one of three types of cues. "Right there" is used for literal or text-explicit questions, meaning that the reader can find the answer in the paragraph or sentence. "Search and think" means the answer is inferential or text-implicit, not directly stated. "On your own" is used for critical questions that require independent evaluation. This version of QAR is especially helpful for struggling students mystified by how their peers always know the answers.

Questioning others is a simple strategy that provides purpose for the reading. After students have completed reading, listening, or preparing for a quiz, have them take turns asking the teacher questions about the material. The students can be placed in groups to construct questions and answers for their teacher or peers.

Self-questioning can be initiated by providing readers with appropriate questions, then guiding them to pose and answer their own task-specific questions. It may help to provide question stems at first. Typically, stems using who, what, when, where, how, and why are appropriate for building question-asking skills.

Cloze experiences also are valuable. The cloze procedure (Taylor 1953) originally was created to measure content reading performance. Adapted for instruction, the strategy involves taking a section of text, leaving the first and last sentences unchanged, and then deleting every 7th word or, for struggling readers, every 10th word. Students then fill in a word that they believe makes sense. For instructional purposes, synonyms are

acceptable. This type of exercise offers instruction within the context of whole passages and teaches the use of context. The first few experiences filling in the blanks should be conducted using easy-to-read materials and should be demonstrated to the whole class.

Additional clues will be helpful for students who have difficulty filling in the blanks. Extra clues can include: 1) a word bank at the bottom of the page, 2) key words beside the blank, 3) initial letter cues for each blank, or 4) separate blanks for each letter of the missing words. Another variation underlines every 7th or 10th word for students to suggest appropriate synonyms. Teachers can prepare or enlist student help to develop the exercises.

Memory enhancers include recitations, repeated readings, reading rehearsals, and sentence manipulation. These strategies enhance students' memory of passage content. Each activity involves practice and repetition. The use of structured activities involving students in summarizations, restatements, and text revisions can improve reading comprehension.

For recitation, students are asked to restate or summarize information they have just read or heard. Initially, students should be guided to read and discuss the content. Teachers can model how they decide what is important or how to summarize information. Then students, at first using only a few sentences or paragraphs, practice repeating highlights or key ideas from what they just discussed or read. Teachers can ask students to briefly restate such elements as two causal events, the reason the author chose a setting, or similar elements.

Repeated readings offer opportunities for students to rehearse and refine what they already know (Dowhower 1989). Options for implementing repeated readings include: Have students reread a passage, read to a partner, read onto an audiotape, read aloud to young students, or listen to others read. Three or four repeated readings of a passage help readers improve decoding skills and build reading fluency and also enhance comprehension.

Reading rehearsals also assist struggling readers. Permitting silent reading before reading the material aloud helps readers decode troublesome words, assimilate meanings, increase fluency, and bolster their confidence as readers. Repeated readings also provide important rehearsal opportunities. Students can rehearse with a reading partner, tutor, adult at home, or on tape prior to reading aloud to peers.

Instructional listening experiences also are important. Skilled listening is an essential classroom learning tool in all subjects and is directly related to reading. Listening experiences can be deliberately structured to enhance listening, comprehension, and vocabulary knowledge in several ways: 1) Activate and build prior knowledge about passage content; 2) give students a broad purpose for listening to the entire passage; 3) read aloud or choose a recording that is read dramatically; 4) provide some type of visual aids for students to focus on while listening; 5) intersperse predictions, questions, and discussions; 6) guide students to summarize and retell the passage; and 7) ask comprehension questions to stimulate discussion and evaluate comprehen-

sion (Choate and Rakes 1987). Instructional listening experiences offer a variety of potential benefits to readers, including: vocabulary and language expansion, improved comprehension skills to apply later when reading independently, increased content knowledge, and positive and recreational experiences with books.

Motivational tools also merit consideration. Reading management programs, such as the Accelerated Reader or Electronic Bookshelf, often are motivational and build positive student attitudes toward reading. The computer-managed programs provide a monitoring system for each reader for every book completed. Such programs encourage diagnostic teaching and facilitate inclusive instruction because the reading activities completed on an individual basis offer struggling readers materials at their own performance levels and permit them to read at their own pace.

Practice 5: Consider Time and Effort Demands When Choosing Reading Strategies

As we pointed out earlier, many struggling readers require explicit, intense, and extended instruction. Yet, because these students tend to progress slowly, their time must be used efficiently.

For example, several methods developed for teaching reading to students with complex learning needs involve multisensory instruction. As described by McCormick (1995) and Spafford and Grosser (1996), these detailed methods may be too demanding for the inclusive class.

However, the multisensory concept is appropriate for selective application. Coaching a student to simultaneously see, say, and trace a word several times and then to write a troublesome sight word may provide the needed intensity to reinforce memory of the word. To conserve time, repetitive multisensory practice should be reserved for only the most essential letters, words, and concepts.

Student time is a major issue when selecting an instructional strategy. Questions to answer include: How much student time is required? Would a different approach produce similar gains in less time? Will peers benefit as well? The possible negative effect on all classroom learning resulting from more demands on teacher time and energy raises similar questions: What are the time and effort requirements? Will extra time be redesignated or stolen? With answers to these questions, the classroom teacher can evaluate benefits to the target student and his or her classmates.

Practice 6: Organize the Instructional Environment to Embrace Inclusive Reading Instruction

A well-managed learning environment facilitates inclusive teaching and learning. A few of the management factors that directly affect reading instruction are highlighted here.

Physical organization of the classroom sets the stage for instruction. Placement of furniture and resources defines certain areas for specific purposes, such as

small-group areas for shared reading or specific skill instruction, learning or listening centers, and spots for independent and recreational reading. Desks that can be easily moved offer options for group or individual reading activities. Other considerations include designing paths for easy mobility and ensuring that the teacher can view and monitor the entire room from each area.

Procedural organization requires a comprehensive behavior plan and clear, ppsted, and enforced classroom rules. Limiting the rules to the few that are most critical helps students remember them. In addition, routine procedures that conserve time and motion should be established, including how students should get and store their reading materials, what to do when they finish reading, where to put their written work, and the like.

Teacher organization is a basic premise of differentiated instruction. Inclusive reading teachers plan systematically, obtain and organize reading materials and activities at several levels of difficulty, and blend large-group, small-group, and individual reading activities to meet students' needs.

Principle 2: Emphasize Authentic Reading Content and Skills

Because struggling readers often need extra time to master the process, *what and why* they read escalate in importance. Authentic reading — reading that satisfies specific wants and needs, not merely the requirements of a school assignment — focuses time and energy on the practical aspects of teaching and learning. Reading instruction that emphasizes authentic content and purposes helps prepare students for more effective functioning in school and in life.

Practice 7: Select Authentic Reading Content and Purposes

Providing meaningful contexts within which students read is often reported as key to effective literacy instruction (Clark 1995). Authentic reading content can be found in textbooks, trade books, magazines, electronic media, directions, labels, or any type of material containing information the individual reader wants or

needs to know. For example, authentic content for young readers might focus on the Power Rangers; for older readers it might focus on sports or self-improvement. Choosing the right motivational slant means teachers must know their students' interests and needs.

It also is important to directly teach and practice reading for authentic purposes, such as locating, confirming, and sharing text information with others and reading for safety. Appropriate tasks might include reading aloud a science fact that proves a point or reading directions and warnings for medicines, popular gadgets, contact lenses, and sports equipment. As noted later in Practices 8 and 23, recreational reading, an important real-life endeavor, also is an essential component of an effective reading program for all types of learners.

Practice 8: Emphasize and Explicitly Teach the Most Authentic Reading Skills

Struggling readers need explicit instruction in the most authentic reading tasks and skills, including when, why, and how to apply each skill strategically. The intent is to teach them *how* to read to satisfy their own needs.

Authentic tasks include reading to: 1) facilitate learning or sharing information; 2) support, contradict, or verify prior information; 3) paraphrase to share or remember; 4) summarize to apply, remember, or share; 5) evaluate the accuracy or utility of content or prior knowledge; and 6) locate and use appropriate supplementary resources when extra information is needed.

Most struggling readers require extra time, instruction, and practice to master specific reading skills. While their peers may learn some skills incidentally, students who find reading difficult often need explicit and extended instruction.

Word Recognition Skills. Recognizing words is both a set of skills and a set of strategies for reading comprehension. Survival words, such as *poison* or *exit*, must be recognized instantly to ensure the reader's safe and effective functioning in a variety of settings. Readers must recognize quickly the words that occur the most frequently in text in order to maintain fluency and comprehension. Mental images associated with such words as *puppy* or *jump* tend to make these words more memorable. Words such as *if*, *and*, or *the*, which lack associated concrete images, may be especially problematic. Struggling readers often need extra experiences in order to remember survival and high-frequency words and extended instruction and practice to master the low-image words.

Phonemic awareness — comprehension of the *sound* structure of language and the ability to manipulate sounds into words — is a fundamental skill for building independent decoding skills. Activities that teach students to detect rhymes, segment words into component sounds, blend sounds or syllables into words, associate sounds with letter symbols, and invent spelling of words help enhance students' phonemic awareness. Explicitly teaching these tasks, using activities such as those described by Ericson and Juliebo (1998) and Smith (1998), should benefit many beginning readers who struggle, especially those with dyslexic tendencies.

The degree to which individuals find phonetic analysis useful depends, in part, on the reader's auditory abilities, the stability of the particular phonetic element, and the speed with which application of sounds yields successful decoding. Sounds at the beginning of words tend to be the most useful and should be emphasized. When combined with context, the utility of beginning sounds increases. Ending sounds, paired with beginning sounds and context, offer even stronger clues. Students who find reading or phonics difficult may need extra coaching to apply this strategy for decoding words in text.

Contextual analysis is the strategy that proficient readers employ to discover the meaning of unknown words. However, effectively using context clues is cognitively demanding. Struggling readers need explicit instruction and consistent coached practice to use context and to "skip the word, read on, then come back" when unknown words are encountered.

Because struggling readers may have limited vocabulary, explicit instruction in word meanings is an essential component of every lesson, particularly in the content areas. Instruction should include activities to activate and build prior knowledge (see Practice 4), discussions and graphics to highlight features and interrelationships of terms, and coached practice using resources for further details.

Comprehension. Reading to comprehend specific information is an important authentic reading skill. Literal comprehension, or understanding details, involves several subskills that are useful in school and beyond:

1) reading to locate information; 2) extracting essential from incidental details; 3) following directions; and for certain types of text, such as directions and recipes, 4) sequencing information. Struggling readers often need explicit instruction and coached practice to recognize text signals, quickly locate information, and then identify the most significant details.

Higher-order comprehension can be particularly difficult for many struggling readers. The strategies for accomplishing each skill should be taught, practiced, evaluated, and reviewed on a regular basis. Repeated demonstrations, coaching, and using think-alouds are appropriate for teaching several authentic comprehension skills: finding the main idea and supportive details, summarizing, making inferences, drawing conclusions, connecting cause and effect, and evaluating both the text and the author's techniques and competence, the most authentic of the higher-order comprehension skills. The level of text difficulty should be increased gradually as students master comprehension skills.

Locating and effectively using additional resources for extra help is an especially valuable skill for students to apply in the classroom and throughout life as they continue to read and learn. Students need both direct instruction and meaningful practice using such resources as the dictionary, encyclopedia, supplementary texts, and on-line information. Permitting students to use such resources during tests and key assignments highlights their relevance and offers students a powerful motivation to master their use.

One of the most authentic reading purposes is reading for recreation. Students who find reading difficult

often tend to avoid extra reading. The teacher's role is to build the recreational reading habit, rather than to teach it as a skill. It is important for the teacher to offer regular reading experiences that are interesting, comfortable, and appealing and that carry no further classroom demands.

Practice 9: Teach Reading Skills When Students Need Them

The point at which teachers introduce skills in lessons depends on their philosophy of reading instruction. Whole language enthusiasts tend to favor teaching skills as needed during or after students read a passage, a practice that often benefits average and above-average readers. In contrast, skills-based advocates prefer teaching needed skills before students read a passage. However, as Harris and Graham (1996) note, most struggling readers need both approaches. They may need explicit instruction in skills before, during, and after reading. For example, the teacher uses passage segments to teach skills prior to reading. Next, as readers practice the skills in whole passages, the teacher prompts as needed. Then the teacher reviews target skills after reading. Thus struggling readers benefit from both the skill-based focus on reading mechanics and the whole-language focus on application and generalization.

Skill Sequence. The best sequence in which to emphasize certain reading skills depends on the synthesis of at least four factors. First, the reader's performance pro-

file, as identified through diagnostic teaching (see Practice 18), may suggest the next skill he or she needs to master. Second, the reader's authentic reading needs help identify priorities. Third, the demands of the content to be read determine needed skills. And finally, the logical arrangement of skills from least to most difficult suggests the sequence in which they should be taught.

Principle 3: Offer Appropriate Accommodations and Assistance

Accommodations and assistance designed to meet individual readers' differences enhance the differentiation process (recall Practice 1). Struggling readers need optimum learning conditions, activities, assignments, and learning supplements.

Practice 10: Maximize Reader Success

Manipulating certain classroom conditions may accommodate at least some students' individual needs. However, the teacher first must identify each student's learning style by analyzing past and present reading performances, interviewing the student, and continuing to teach reading diagnostically (see Practice 18).

Arranging the learning environment to match students' learning preferences (insofar as is practical and possible) may increase the likelihood of student success. Environmental variables to consider include: 1) best

seating; 2) amount of light; 3) temperature; 4) type and amount of noise; 5) the best way to handle distractions, especially for students with special needs; 6) best lesson length; and 7) amount and type of lesson variations that accommodate individual students' needs and facilitate their reading growth.

Practice 11: Structure Appropriate Reading Practice

Several years ago the authors, while visiting in an elementary classroom, asked three students to read something. Each student selected a story in the classroom basal reader and proceeded to walk to the reading corner, where "reading takes place." The students obviously did not fully understand that reading can occur at almost any location using countless types of text.

Several tactics can be used to expand students' view of reading and, at the same time, increase appropriate reading practice:

- Provide varied reading environments, such as a special corner, large pillows, bean bag, or rocking chair just for reading.
- Supply ample trade books and alternative reading formats. A good rule of thumb is to have at least three books, magazines, or other resources per student.
- Read to students every day, even if only for a few minutes. Begin an interesting story or read an interesting portion from a book or news article.
- Provide ample opportunities for prereading and guided reading.

- Encourage paired reading or rereading.
- Use peer tutoring for initial and rereading purposes.
- Reinforce new reading skills during content area lessons.
- Continuously review and provide practice applying newly taught reading strategies and skills.
- Coach students to apply reading skills in many different reading contexts, for example, reading graphics in mathematics and social studies texts, online resources, and newspapers.

Practice 12: Arrange for Suitable Recreational Reading

Students who find reading difficult sometimes have problems moving from reading for the purpose of learning-to-read to reading-to-learn. As noted earlier, recreational reading is an important part of an inclusive reading program. Several familiar activities encourage recreational reading in all types of classes; however, the key inclusive element of each is incorporation of a generous assortment of easy reading materials that are interesting enough to provide enjoyment.

Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) involves everyone, including the teacher, in a 5- to 15-minute silent reading experience every day. Students, with teacher guidance, select material that they can read independently during the uninterrupted time period. No formal evaluation is conducted because the purpose is to just read (McCracken and McCracken 1978). Struggling readers may need extra supervision to select

books and may need to be coaxed to work independently. Students with attention problems may need special seating, ear plugs, or headsets to block distractions.

Reading stations are helpful. Providing interesting books, pamphlets, articles, and access to online resources at learning centers or stations may entice even the most reluctant readers. The learning stations can be based on special topics, units, or themes.

Book clubs are another strategy for luring readers. Teachers might offer students the opportunity to purchase paperback books through publishers who also supply free classroom books based on the number of books purchased. Support may be solicited from area businesses so that every student can buy books.

A *classroom library* filled with high-interest books, magazines, and newspapers and with reading materials and games for the computer is central to building an environment in which students seek to read. In order to develop and expand the class library, teachers might consider asking students, with their parents' written permission, to donate books that they no longer read. Other sources for book donations include parents, former students, businesses, and others in the community. To encourage donations and to acknowledge the giver, the teacher might mount a book plate inside each book, citing the donor's name and date of the gift. Teachers also can use free books obtained through book clubs to stock the library and can purchase reading materials at garage sales. If the school library has sufficient resources, the teacher might consider checking out 30 to 50 books for the classroom library, changing selections every month or two.

Incentives for reading include using stickers, ribbons, charts, popcorn or pizza parties, and other types of recognition for meeting recreational reading goals. Teachers should be sure some rewards are available to all students according to their ability.

Special programs also can be used. Teachers might check with school and local libraries to identify Saturday and summer programs, preferred reading lists, storytelling programs, and other services for young readers. Then they can notify students' families of appropriate programs and suggest that parents encourage their students to participate.

Practice 13: Adjust Reading Tasks According to Student Learning Profiles

In order to select the most appropriate reading tasks, the teacher should understand each student's learning style (Carbo 1997; Dunn 1995), needs, and unique abilities (Gardner 1997). Diagnostic teaching (see Practice 18) is the key to identifying each reader's individual learning profile. For example, a student's best reading mode can be identified by comparing the quantity and quality of comprehension when the student reads orally with his or her comprehension when reading silently. Struggling readers should be encouraged to use their better reading mode for maximum comprehension, though instruction should target both modes.

Tailoring the stimulus/response format to individual learning profiles also may help students. Options for stimuli might include words in isolation or in context,

highlighted elements of words or text, easier text or shortened assignments, study guides, incomplete graphic organizers, oral or written questions, or listening experiences interspersed among oral and silent reading activities. Options for response adjustments might include guiding students to read orally or silently, according to their best reading mode; having them read text silently to locate answers, then read answers aloud; having them read only highlighted elements; or having them dramatize text or answers.

Practice 14: Select Appropriate Reading Accommodations

Providing accommodations to meet individual needs is central to differentiated reading instruction. Some students need more varied or intense accommodations than do others. For complex or serious disabilities, such as profound deafness or severe learning disabilities, differentiated reading instruction with accommodations may supplement, but not circumvent, the need for pull-out instruction with a specialist. However, most struggling readers can flourish in the general classroom when differentiated reading instruction is supplemented with specific accommodations and when the reading program is planned, monitored, and implemented in collaboration with other professionals, parents, and students (see Principle 5).

Appropriate accommodations may involve adjusting instructional strategies, materials, assignments, resources, or management strategies (see Appendix for

options). However, when selecting accommodations for specific students, minimizing classroom disruptions is an important consideration. Individual student needs should be examined in relation to: 1) effective teaching strategies and accommodations that benefit all students (potentially the least disruptive), 2) modifications of effective practices, and 3) specialized practices (possibly somewhat disruptive).

Principle 4: Increase Collaboration to Synergize Inclusive Reading Instruction

Successful inclusion involves substantive collaboration among teachers and professionals, students, and family members — all working together to enhance inclusive teaching and learning.

Practice 15: Collaborate with Other Professionals to Enhance and Coordinate an Inclusive Reading Program

Positive relationships with special educators are a hallmark of general education teachers identified as effective inclusionists (Olson, Chalmers, and Hoover 1997). Their collaborations may occur as co-teaching or consultation and also may involve other professionals.

Co-Teaching. This collaborative model pairs a general and special educator to share teaching responsibilities. Instruction occurs in the regular classroom and, according to the curriculum and student needs, the

teachers select one or more of the co-teaching approaches: 1) lead teacher and support teacher, 2) station teaching, 3) parallel instruction, 4) alternate teaching, and 5) team teaching (Friend and Cook 1996; Vaughn, Schumm, and Arguelles 1997).

Consulting Teacher. The consulting model typically involves a special educator who collaborates with a general educator to design reading instruction that meets the needs of specific students. The classroom teacher implements the plan but continues to call on the consultant as needed.

Co-Assessment and Co-Planning. Regardless of model or approach, the classroom and special education teachers collaborate to assess reading progress and evaluate program effectiveness (Tiegerman-Farber 1998). They also monitor progress regularly, then plan instruction collaboratively.

Practice 16: Collaborate with Students to Plan, Monitor, and Evaluate Reading Progress

Involving students in shaping their own reading programs shifts the focus from reading problems to reading successes, an essential motivational strategy for struggling readers. Students share responsibility for their reading improvement when teachers and students collaborate to plan, monitor, and evaluate progress. Potential benefits to students are increased self-awareness, active involvement, positive motivation, and goal-directed reading.

Planning begins with collaborative assessment and moves to contract development. Activities might

include: 1) identifying the student's reading interests, 2) assessing reading successes and problems, and 3) together, targeting two problematic tasks and six manageable ones using the preferred format, then developing an oral or written contract that specifies what the student and teacher will do and when.

Progress should be monitored regularly and instruction adjusted accordingly. Appropriate activities include: 1) Use reading portfolios to organize students' products and other performance indicators; 2) assess and chart progress in a portfolio; 3) periodically review charted progress with student; 4) together, analyze what does and does not work; 5) review the contract and progress toward compliance; and 6) plan program adjustments together.

Finally, the student should be involved in evaluating progress and program content. Suggestions include: using multiple forms of evaluation, coaching students to self-evaluate reading progress, collaboratively evaluating contract compliance, and using evaluation results to initiate a new planning cycle.

Practice 17: Collaborate with Families to Plan and Monitor Reading Progress

The value of direct parent involvement is clear: Students whose families are involved in their learning on a regular basis are more likely to succeed than are students with little family support (Fuller and Olsen 1998). Struggling readers need the added advantage that frequent school-home collaboration offers. At least three specific areas of involvement should be addressed.

Collaboration begins by encouraging families to become actively involved in school activities. Examples include inviting families to participate in literacy events and school support groups, to serve as guest readers, or to tape book reports or story enactments.

Families should be given a variety of suggestions for home activities. Recommendations might include: Schedule a regular read-aloud time, participate in community literacy activities, discuss television programs that enhance literacy, reward reading, and communicate regularly with the school.

Launching the school year with a note or meeting with parents to emphasize their role in their child's reading sets the stage for productive interactions. Teachers should inform parents of what communications to expect from school and when they will be sent. Parents also should be invited to report their concerns. Several tactics enhance the school-home partnership: Communicate often and positively, provide a school-year schedule, list recommended books, describe the reading program and student products to be sent home, and identify the best times for conferences.

Principle 5: Expand Routine Monitoring and Evaluation to Adjust Instruction

Extra monitoring and in-depth evaluation permit the teacher to quickly pinpoint instructional elements that are and are not meeting struggling readers' needs. Thus the teacher can instantly adjust these instructional elements.

Practice 18: Teach Reading Diagnostically

Diagnostic teaching is an important element of differentiated instruction (see Practice 1) and is essential in an inclusive reading class. A three-part strategy provides a framework for diagnostic teaching: 1) reflection, 2) planning, and 3) intervention.

While teaching a new study strategy, a teacher may notice that some students are having difficulty. The teacher *reflects* on what has happened and on alternative instructional procedures. Having decided on a

teaching strategy, a *plan* is needed. Should different materials be used? Should learners be paired? The teacher develops a plan to extend or reteach, *intervenes* as planned, then repeats procedures by reflecting on the process and outcomes of the current instructional intervention.

Diagnostic teaching requires continuous assessment throughout a lesson. The teacher must notice, measure, record, and compare different levels of success. While students read independently or in groups, teachers need to circulate to provide guidance and analyze and reflect on the appropriateness of their instructional techniques.

Practice 19: Provide Regular Supervision and Guidance

Literacy instruction in an inclusive class requires increased attention to a range of learners in order to plan successful instruction beyond the next lesson in the book. Students who read below the level of their peers will progress at slower rates and frequently will need extra teacher supervision and guidance.

Practice 20: Commit to Inclusionary Reading Practices

These five principles in this fastback offer general guidelines for implementing inclusive reading instruction:

- Choose and emphasize the most promising instructional methods.

- Emphasize authentic reading content and skills.
- Offer appropriate accommodations and assistance.
- Increase collaboration to synergize inclusive reading instruction.
- Expand routine monitoring and evaluation to adjust instruction.

It is important to remember that inclusive teaching is not so different from general effective teaching. However, inclusive reading instruction is distinguished by several additional features: supplementary accommodations, the methods and content emphasized, explicitness and length of teaching and learning, and increased supervision, evaluation, and collaboration.

Teacher commitment to excellent instruction for *all* students as early as possible is the real key to successfully implementing an inclusive reading program. Extra effort may be required, but dedicated teachers find their reward in their students' reading accomplishments. Some teachers continue to resist inclusion, but a teacher who commits to excellence presents a strong case for offering more inclusive reading instruction.

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Appendix: Options for Supplemental Reading Accommodations

Following are a variety of accommodations that can be used to meet individual needs. These accommodations include adjusting instructional strategies, materials, assignments, resources, or management strategies. For more information about using these accommodations, see Practice 14.

Instructional Strategies

- Advance Organizers
- Checklist of Steps
- Charted Progress
- Computer Activities
- Evaluation Checklists
- Graphic Organizers
- Mnemonic Guides
- Multisensory Techniques
- Organization Charts
- Repeated Readings
- Self-Questioning
- Strategy Posters
- Verbal Rehearsal
- Video Modeling
- Visual Imagery

Materials

- Adaptive/Assistive Devices
- Alternative Texts
- Audiotapes of Text
- Captioned Films
- CD-ROM Books
- Coded Text
- Extension Texts
- Games for Practice
- Highlighted Text
- Key Term Definitions
- Multiple Texts
- Parallel Texts
- Simplified Text
- Summaries
- Video Enactments

Assignments

- Adapted Testing
- Advance Assignments
- Alternative Assignments
- Extended Time
- Extra Practice
- Outlined Tasks
- Question Guides
- Reference Access
- Scripted Practice
- Segmented Tasks
- Shortened Assignments
- Simplified Directions
- Simplified Tasks
- Structured Notes
- Study Guides
- Timed Practice

Human Resources

- Co-Teacher
- Cooperative Group
- Instructional Coach
- Interpreter
- Peer Advocate
- Peer Notetaker
- Peer Prompter
- Peer Tutor
- Personal Attendant
- Reading Partner
- Volunteer Tutor

Management Strategies

- Charted Performance
- Checklists
- Contracts
- Extra Reinforcement

Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation

The Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation was established on 13 October 1966 with the signing, by Dr. George H. Reavis, of the irrevocable trust agreement creating the Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation Trust.

George H. Reavis (1883-1970) entered the education profession after graduating from Warrensburg Missouri State Teachers College in 1906 and the University of Missouri in 1911. He went on to earn an M.A. and a Ph.D. at Columbia University. Dr. Reavis served as Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Maryland and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. In 1929 he was appointed director of instruction for the Ohio State Department of Education. But it was as assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction in the Cincinnati public schools (1939-48) that he rose to national prominence.

Dr. Reavis' dream for the Educational Foundation was to make it possible for educators to write and publish the wisdom they acquired through professional activity. He wanted educators and the general public to "better understand the nature of the educative process and the relation of education to human welfare."

The Phi Delta Kappa fastbacks, along with monographs and books on a wide range of topics related to education, are the realization of that dream.

Phi Delta Kappa Fastbacks

This annual series, published each fall and spring, offers fastbacks on a wide range of topics in education. Each fastback is intended to be a focused, authoritative treatment of a topic of current interest to educators and other readers. More than 400 fastbacks have been published since the program began in 1972, many of which are still in print. Topics include:

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Careers
Censorship
Community Involvement
Computers
Curriculum
Decision Making
Dropout Prevention
Foreign Study
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Legal Issues
Mainstreaming
Multiculturalism
Nutrition
Parent Involvement
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64